

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method for distributing information, the method comprising:  
identifying one or more of a plurality of nodes to acknowledge a multicast  
5 message; and  
sending the multicast message to the plurality of nodes, the multicast message  
including an indication of said one or more of the plurality of nodes to acknowledge the  
message.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the multicast message includes an indication of  
10 whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast  
message.
3. The method of claim 2, comprising setting the indication of whether to  
immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate immediate  
acknowledgment if the multicast message is the first message of a messaging window.
- 15 4. The method of claim 3, comprising setting the indication of whether to  
immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate delayed  
acknowledgment if the multicast message is not the first message of the messaging  
window.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the indication of said one or more of the  
20 plurality of nodes to acknowledge the message indicates less than all of the plurality of  
nodes.
6. The method of claim 1, comprising receiving an acknowledgment message  
corresponding to the multicast message, and in response, identifying the multicast  
message and all previously sent messages as being acknowledged.

7. A method performed by a node, the method comprising:  
receiving a multicast message, the multicast message including an indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node;  
identifying that the indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node  
5 includes the node, and in response sending an acknowledgement message to the sender of the multicast message.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein the acknowledgement message acknowledges at least one other message than the multicast message.  
10 9. The method of claim 7, wherein the multicast message includes an indication whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.  
15 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the indication whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message corresponds to delay acknowledgement; and the method comprises delaying said sending the acknowledgement message.  
11. A method for communicating information, the method comprising:  
receiving a multicast message, the multicast message including an indication of whether or not to delay acknowledgement of the multicast message; and  
20 delaying acknowledgment of the multicast message in response the indication identifying to delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.  
12. An apparatus for communicating information, the apparatus comprising:  
means for receiving a message, the message including an indication of whether or not to delay acknowledgement of the message; and  
25 means for delaying acknowledgment of the message in response the indication identifying to delay acknowledgement of the message.

13. An apparatus for distributing information, the apparatus comprising:
  - means for identifying one or more of a plurality of nodes to acknowledge a multicast message; and
    - means for sending the multicast message to the plurality of nodes, the multicast message including an indication of said one or more of the plurality of nodes to acknowledge the message.
14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the multicast message includes an indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.
- 10 15. The apparatus of claim 14, comprising means for setting the indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate immediate acknowledgment if the multicast message is the first message of a messaging window.
16. The apparatus of claim 15, comprising means for setting the indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate delayed acknowledgment if the multicast message is not the first message of the messaging window.
17. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the indication of said one or more of the plurality of nodes to acknowledge the message indicates less than all of the plurality of nodes.
- 20 18. The apparatus of claim 13, comprising means for receiving an acknowledgment message corresponding to the multicast message, and in response, identifying the multicast message and all previously sent messages as being acknowledged.

19. An apparatus performed by a node, the apparatus comprising:  
means for receiving a multicast message, the multicast message including an indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node;  
means for identifying that the indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node includes the node, and in response sending an acknowledgement message to the sender of the multicast message.
- 5                   20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the acknowledgment message acknowledges at least one other message than the multicast message.
- 10                  21. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the multicast message includes an indication whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.
- 15                  22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the indication whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message corresponds to delay acknowledgement; and the apparatus comprises means for delaying said sending the acknowledgment message.
- 20                  23. A computer-readable medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing steps for distributing information, said steps comprising:  
identifying one or more of a plurality of nodes to acknowledge a multicast message; and  
sending the multicast message to the plurality of nodes, the multicast message including an indication of said one or more of the plurality of nodes to acknowledge the message.
- 25                  24. The computer-readable medium of claim 23, wherein the multicast message includes an indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.

25. The computer-readable medium of claim 24, comprising setting the indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate immediate acknowledgment if the multicast message is the first message of a messaging window.

26. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, comprising setting the indication of whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement to indicate delayed acknowledgment if the multicast message is not the first message of the messaging window.

27. The computer-readable medium of claim 23, wherein the indication of said one or more of the plurality of nodes to acknowledge the message indicates less than all of the plurality of nodes.

28. The computer-readable medium of claim 23, comprising receiving an acknowledgment message corresponding to the multicast message, and in response, identifying the multicast message and all previously sent messages as being acknowledged.

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29. A computer-readable medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing steps by a node, said steps comprising:

receiving a multicast message, the multicast message including an indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node;

20 identifying that the indication of at least one designated acknowledgement node includes the node, and in response sending an acknowledgement message to the sender of the multicast message.

30. The computer-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the acknowledgment message acknowledges at least one other message than the multicast message.

31. The computer-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the multicast message includes an indication whether to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message.

32. The computer-readable medium of claim 31, wherein the indication whether  
5 to immediately acknowledge or delay acknowledgement of the multicast message corresponds to delay acknowledgement; and the method comprises delaying said sending the acknowledgment message.